SHANNON

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200th Anniversary

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1755

1955

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Christ Church

HAMILTON SQUARE

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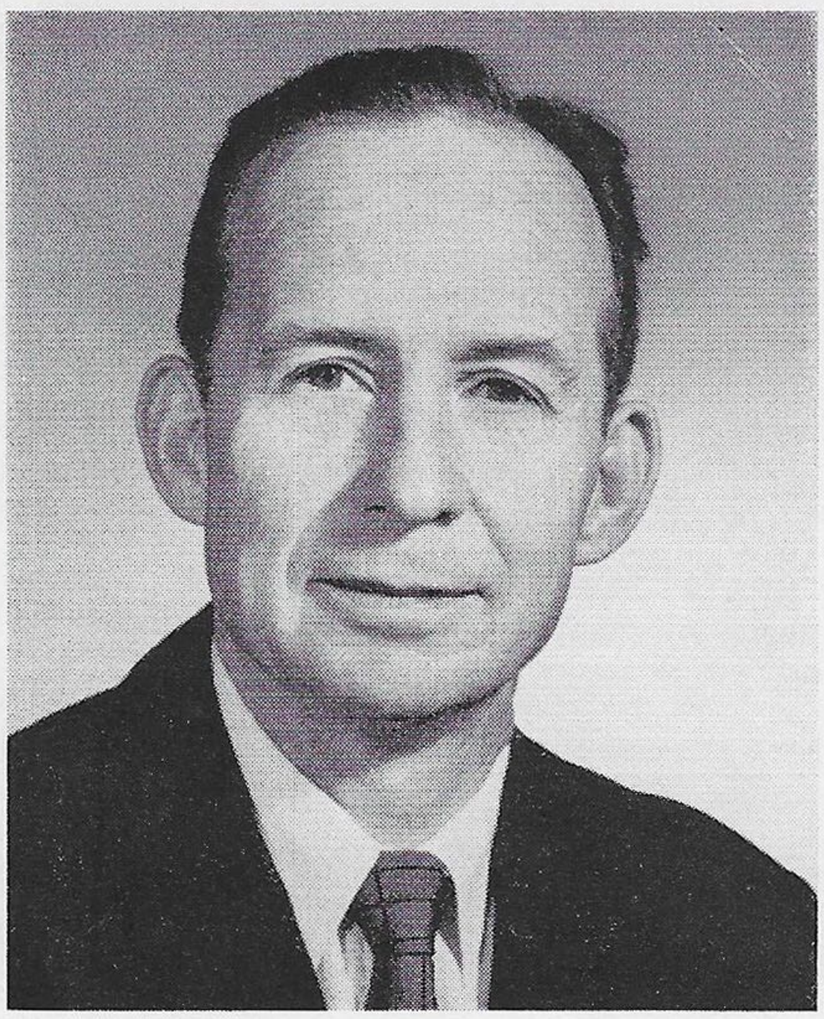
Stroudsburg, R D 1, Pa.



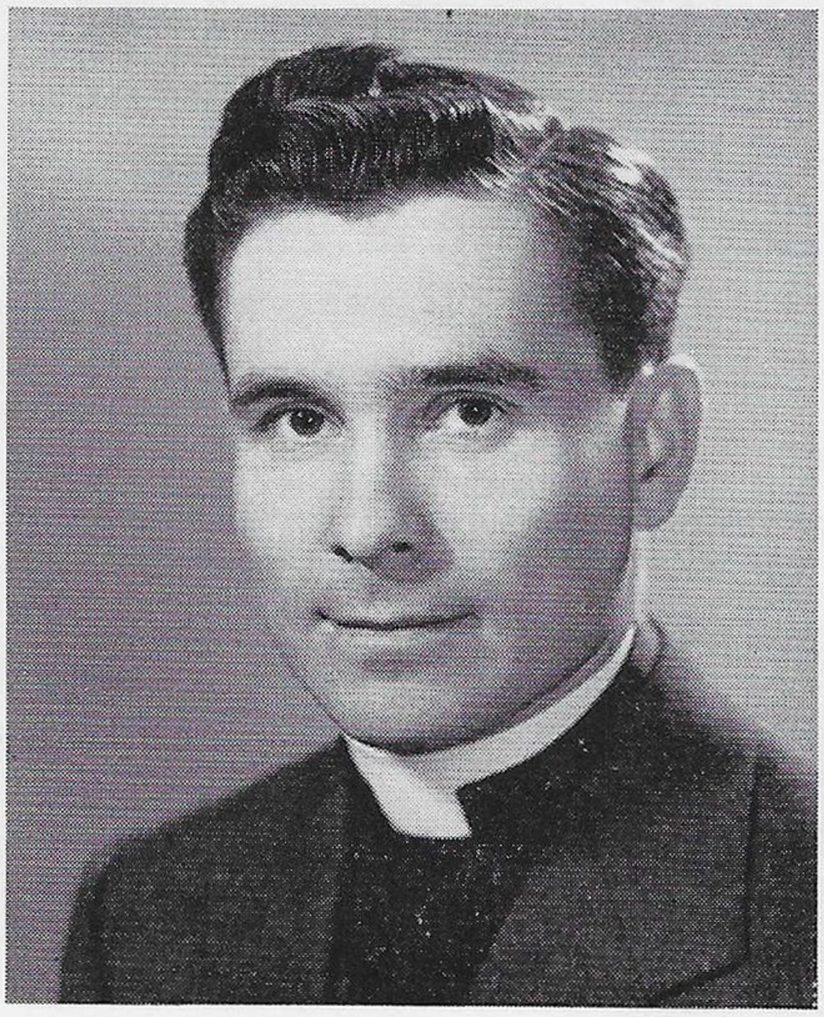
BIOGRAPHY

The Reverend
Adan A. Bohner

The Reverend Adan A. Bohner, the present pastor of the Reformed congregation, has served the longest term of any of the pastors of that denomination. He was born on March 23, 1898, at Shamokin, Pennsylvania, the son of Henry Morris and Sarah Koppenhaver Bohner. He grew up on a farm near Hickory Corners in Northumberland County, attended Stonevalley public school and Dalmatia High School. He graduated from Susquehanna University in 1921 with a Bachelor of Science degree. After graduation, he taught in the Athens High School for two years where he coached a championship football team in 1921. During the school year 1922-1923 he taught minor sciences and chemistry at Phillipsburg High School, Phillipsburg, New Jersey.

He entered the Theological Seminary of the Reformed Church at Lancaster in 1923 and graduated in June 1926 with the degree of Bachelor of Divinity. Upon graduation he was elected as pastor of the Hamilton-Brodheadsville charge which he has served for the past 29 years.

Pastor Bohner was married in March 1927 to Beatrice Goldman of New York City. Mrs. Bohner is a graduate of Columbia University with a Master's Degree. They have two children, Barbara and Roger, and four grandchildren. The pastor and his wife reside in Kunkletown and are very active in church, social, and community affairs.



BIOGRAPHY

The Reverend
John Benjamin Bergstresser

The Reverend John Benjamin Bergstresser, the present pastor of the Lutheran congregation, was born on January 6, 1923, at Hanover, Pennsylvania. He was the seventh son of the Reverend Ralph H. Bergstresser, D.D., pastor of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, Hanover, and Nellie Rupley Bergstresser.

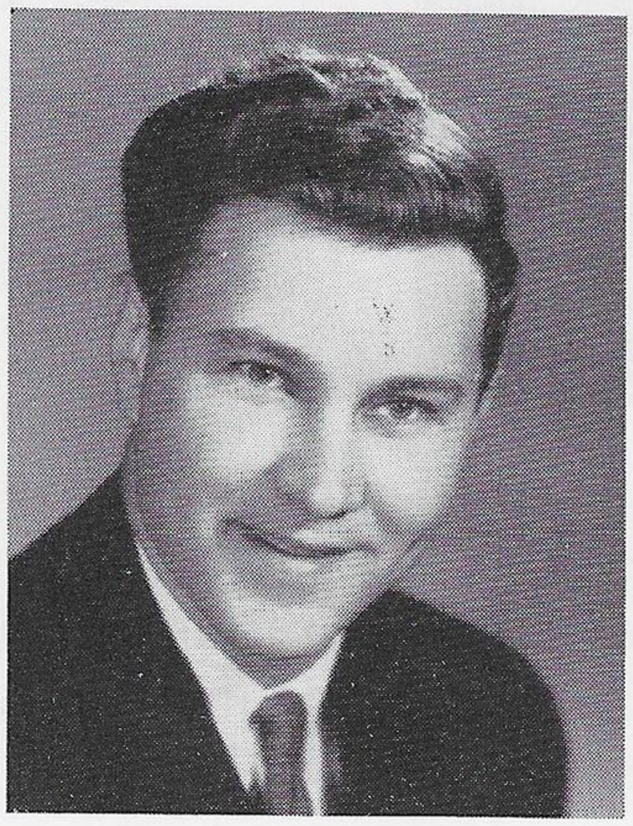
He attended the public schools of Hanover and Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania, and graduated from the Selinsgrove High School with the class of 1942. The same year he entered Susquehanna University as a pre-theological student but interrupted his education in January 1943 to enlist in the United States Army. He went overseas in June 1943 and served with the 213th Coastal Artillery Battalion in North Africa, Italy, Corsica, and southern France. His discharge came in December 1945. He returned to Susquehanna University and received his Bachelor of Arts Degree with the class of 1948. In the same year Pastor Bergstresser entered the Lutheran Theological Seminary of Philadelphia and was graduated in 1951 with the degree of Bachelor of Divinity. He was ordained on May 23, 1951, by the Central Pennsylvania Synod of the United Lutheran Church in America. In June of 1951 he accepted a call to the Hamilton Lutheran Parish.

He was married in 1947 to a classmate, Dawn Ebert of Shamokin Dam, Pennsylvania. Mrs. Bergstresser graduated from Susquehanna in the same year as her husband, receiving a Bachelor of Science degree. They have three children, Janice, Laurie, and Jon Matthew.

Pastor Bergstresser considers himself a great-great-great-great-great grandson of the congregation. He is a direct descendant of Philip

Bergstresser who was confirmed and received his first communion with the Lutheran congregation here at Hamilton in 1782. He married Lena Heller of this area and their first child, Ludwig Bergstresser, is listed on the church records as having been baptized in 1790.

Pastor Bergstresser has five brothers serving as Lutheran ministers: Ralph, Kendig, Daniel, Philip, and Paul.



Rev. James G. Shannon
1947 - 1951

The History and Times of
CHRIST CHURCH
HAMILTON SQUARE

While there were two older churches by a few years in the county the Hamilton Union or Christ Church is the mother church of the Evangelical Lutheran and German Reformed churches in Monroe County. Among the names of the early members are found those living in every part of the county. The churches at Kunkletown and Gilbert were the offspring in large part of the congregation located in Hamilton Township. Among the first names to appear on the records of Christ Church were those of the Shupp and Serfass family. Soon after 1770 these same names are to be found on the church records of the Kunkletown and Gilbert churches. Many other Lutheran and Reformed congregations in the county may be said to be children or grandchildren of the mother church at Hamilton. The Reverend George Heilig, a Lutheran, was instrumental in starting a number of Lutheran churches, one being St. John's Church in north Hamilton Township which was started in May 1846.

Early History

The majority of early settlers came from below the mountains from the southern counties on the Delaware. Some came from the forks of the Delaware, and some of the German settlers came here directly from their entry to this country from the port of Philadelphia. From *Rupp's Thirty Thousand Immigrants* one can get some idea of the great stream of settlers, Lutheran and Reformed, coming to this section from below the Wind Gap. They usually came in groups and had with them their carpenters, tinsmith, wheelwright, farmers, cabinetworkers, cooper, miller, blacksmith, and their pastor who was their leader in religious and educational matters. They came because of the rich valleys and good water to be found here.

Philip Bossert came to this section about 1740 and began clearing up a farm. Other early settlers were John McDowell and Conrad Bittenbender who came in 1744.

Just a few years previous to the founding of this congregation some very interesting history was in the making in this immediate neighborhood. It came about because of the "Walking Purchase" of 1737 with the Indians for land lying along the Delaware or in the forks of the Delaware. Most any history book will tell you the injustice done to the Indians by the manner in which the white people carried out their part of the program. It was not worthy of a civilized people or of common justice. The Indians called it the "Running Purchase." From this point on the Indians were hostile to the early settlers, and later on when they were incited by the French during the French and Indian Wars (1754-1763) they committed terrible depredations upon the white people of this vicinity.

All of the massacres and happenings in this area centered about the plantation of Philip Bossert which included the church property. His home was selected as one of the forts for the settlers. The plantation was located midway between Fort Norris at Kresgeville and Fort Hamilton at Stroudsburg. In the Provincial Records there are quotations from letters of Major Parsons of Easton to Governor Denny on April 24, 1757, and June 22, 1757, telling of how the settlers had gathered in the homes of Philip Bossert, Conrad Bittenbender, and John McDowell. Philip Bossert had been at Fort Norris where he had read a letter from Major Parsons saying that the French had incited the Indians who would shortly attack the people of the Minnisinks region. He returned to tell his neighbors and invite them to move their belongings to his place. The following morning Peter Soan and Christian Klein and daughter returned to their farms to look after the cattle. The two men were murdered and the daughter taken captive.

On June 22, 1757, George Ebert, a young man of 16 years of age living in Plainfield Township made an affidavit that on the second day of May he and eighteen armed men with wagons went over the Blue Mountains to Bossert's to assist these inhabitants who had been attacked several days before by enemy Indians. They stopped first at the home of Conrad Bittenbender where two of the men halted. The others went on to Bossert's. Ebert, Bittenbender, Peter Shaeffer, John Nolf, Jacob Roth, Michael Kierser, and a certain Keins went about two miles in the woods to look for a neighbor's horses. They found six and were returning when they were attacked by fifteen French Indians about one-half mile from Bittenbender's house. Bit-

tenbender, Roth, and Nolf were killed. Ebert and Shaeffer were taken prisoner. They were bound immediately and marched off. The next day they fell in with a company of twenty Indians who had Abraham Miller, his mother, and Adam Snell's daughter prisoner. They marched as far as Tioga where they separated. Eight of the Indians took Ebert and Miller with them. They saw Klein's daughter at Tioga. Abraham Miller's mother was killed because she could not keep up with the march. After Tioga the two men were untied and managed to escape during the night. They came to French Margaret's place at Tioga where they were concealed by her for nearly four weeks. When Indians came searching for prisoners, she gave them instructions on the best way to get home and sent them on their way. They learned on the way home that Adam Snell's daughter had become lame and had been killed. In three days they were at Wyoming and finally reached home by way of Fort Hamilton.

This information is interesting for several reasons. It shows the harrowing conditions under which our forefathers had to endure at times in order to build their homes and farms and churches here in the wilderness. It also gives proof that there were many settlers in this locality at that early date—there must have been at least 100. Another reason is that the dozen or more people killed near the Bossert home must have been buried on his land and without doubt in that part which his deed specified should be used as a graveyard. No traces of burials elsewhere in the community can be found except the lone grave near the stone house on Bossert's farm where the old German he had in his employ breaking flax when shot by the Indians was buried.

Religious Influences and Early Missionary Work*

The earliest religious influence in the county came from the headwaters of the Delaware. This territory centered around the Smithfields at Shawnee and was claimed first, we believe, by the Dutch Reformed coming down from New York. These people occupied territory as far down the valley as Stroudsburg with a few families coming farther west. They had a preacher as early as 1730 and built a log church two miles above Shawnee in 1742.

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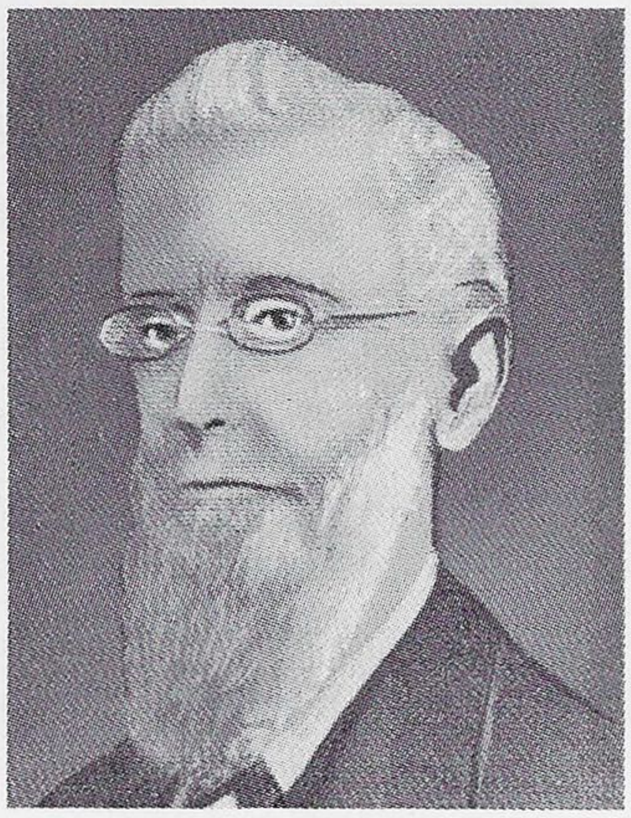
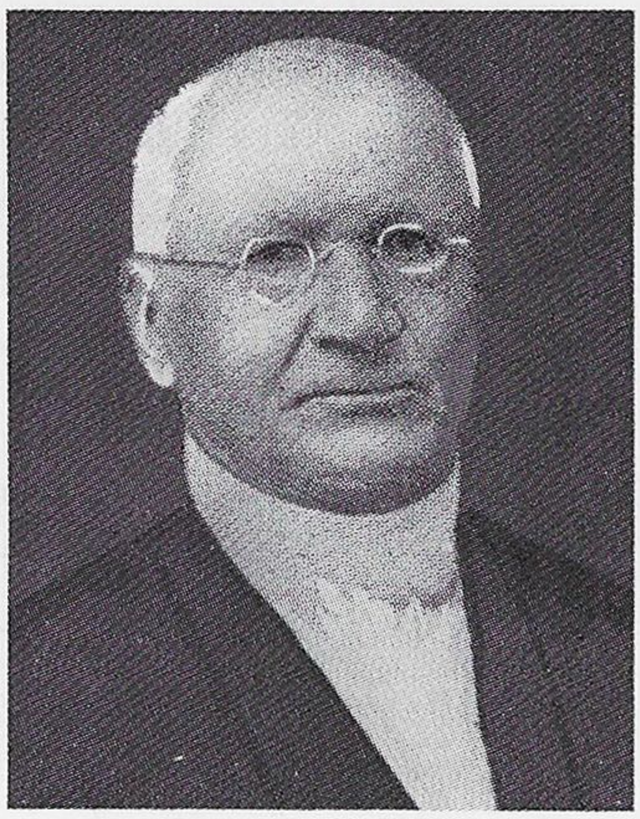
*Most of the published works and history which you can find in libraries indicate that religious activity in this area started in the early 1760's. The late William S. Lesh, our local historian, did extensive original research in historical archives and seminary libraries and has established that there were missionary workers in our region as early as 1750. He conceded that any year between 1752 and 1755 could logically be chosen as the date for the starting of our congregation here at Hamilton. We chose 1755.



Rev. George Heilig
1842 - 1857



Rev. Theodore L. Hoffeditz
1812 - 1834

In 1752 the Presbyterians erected a stone church near the present Shawnee. Other denominations were allowed to use this building at different times. Before 1800 it was used by Lutherans, Reformeds, and Baptists for they had no churches there of their own. When services were held there for the Lutherans they were conducted by either the pastor from the Plainfield or the Hamilton church. Even as late as 1820, the German Reformed pastor, the Rev. Theodore Hoffeditz, held services there. Lutherans from the Smithfield area often attended services at the Hamilton church. The lists of communicants of our church dating from 1768 contain names of residents from the remotest sections of the county.

The Moravians established a mission near Kunkletown in 1743 and another near Gilbert in 1753. However, they were practically wiped out during the French and Indian War by hostile Indians.

From a search of the early deeds one soon becomes impressed with the fact that the early religious influence of the Hamilton section of the county came by way of the Wind Gap. These early settlers were Germans of the Lutheran and Reformed faith. They started coming to this county shortly after 1720. Germans came to this country before 1720 but they settled in communities near the larger cities. An example of this is Germantown near Philadelphia. After 1720 they came in great streams from the port of Philadelphia looking for good land to clear and farm. These people often were without religious leadership because they were so widely scattered over the land. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts was instrumental in starting missionary work among the people. The Rev. Henry Melchoir Muhlenberg and the Rev. Michael Schlalter came to Pennsylvania soon after 1740.

In 1743 Muhlenberg said, "It seems as if now were the time in which God would visit us in Pennsylvania with His special Grace. It is indeed high time. If it had remained thus a few years more, our poor Lutherans would have been wholly scattered and gone into heathenism.

"Every sect in the world is here. The most scandalous things are heard freely and publicly spoken against God and His Holy Word. Parents have permitted their children to grow up without baptism, without instruction and knowledge, and to go into heathenism."

In his Journal, Muhlenberg highly commends the work of Rudolphus Schrenk above the Blue Mountains in 1750. Because of this description we know that the missionary Schrenk worked among the Germans here, but he was not ordained and could not baptize or give communion.

About this time Halle Institute of Germany sent twenty-four missionaries to America. Among those named was the Reverend J. A. Frederici who studied with Muhlenberg. He located in the Smithfield section in 1752 and worked this area also. He is listed as the first pastor of the Hamilton Lutheran congregation. He administered the first communion in 1768 of which we have record to 37 persons, and traveled to Bethlehem to purchase a record book for this purpose. This book is still in our possession today and has been translated from the original German. In the Old Baptismal Record Book are entries made of children baptized as early as 1752, but these children were taken to the proper authorities at Easton for the purpose. We have complete records of baptisms from 1752 to 1800. The total number being 2769 for both Reformed and Lutheran congregations. Although it looks as if the work progressed slowly from 1754 to 1763, we must remember that the French and Indian War was in progress and many normal activities of the settlers had to be interrupted.

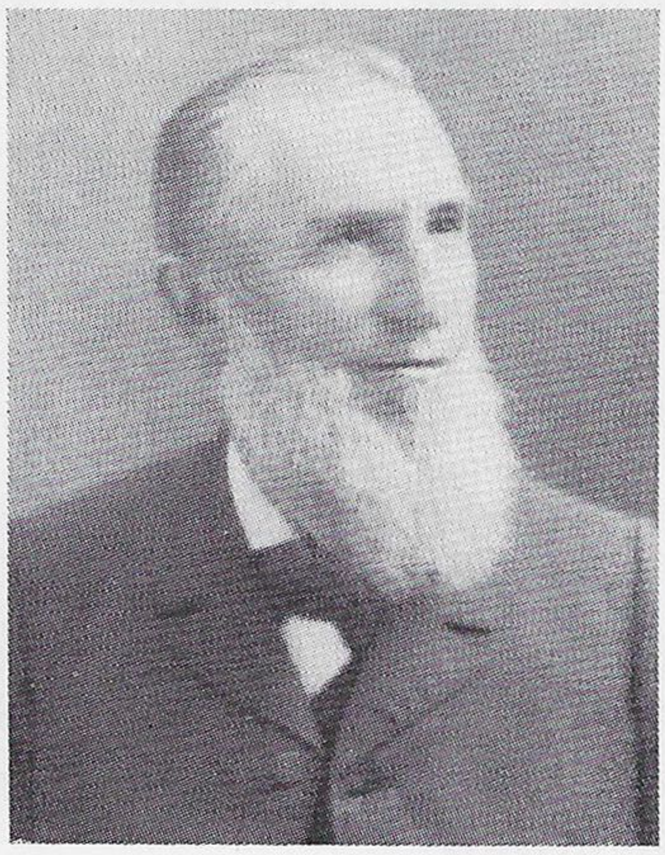
In the early years of the church the records of births, baptisms, marriages, and deaths were quite well kept. Along with these were the list of communicants which are preserved in one book. Marriages and deaths were kept in a separate book which was lost a number of years ago. There were very few records of business transactions kept in the early years or if kept they were lost. A few items were entered in the book containing the births and baptisms.

The first minutes of the congregation of which we have record

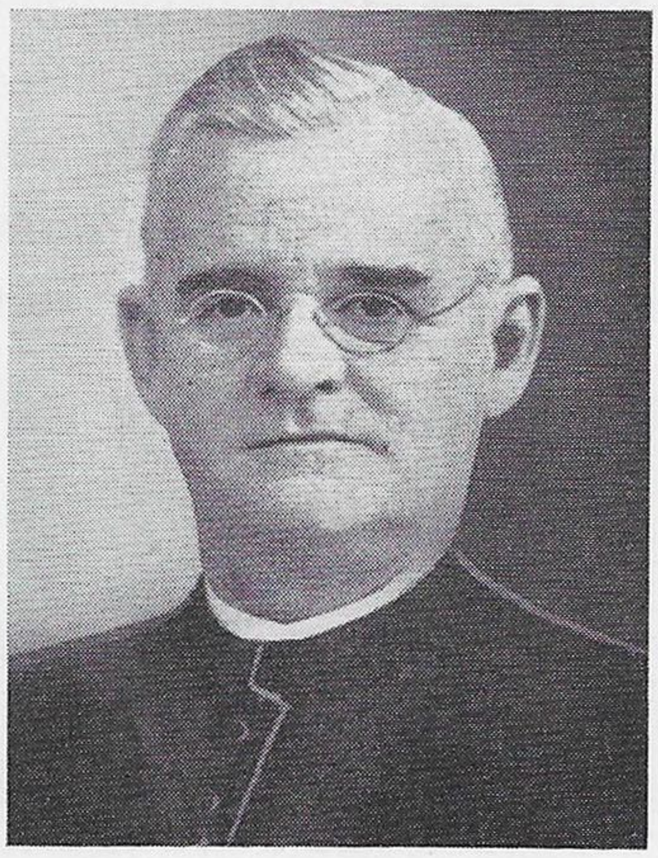
were done by John A. Eyer who was a teacher in the school connected with the church. He was born in 1755 and died in 1837 and is buried in Mt. Zion Cemetery. Most of his teaching was done in the German language and his minutes were written in German with fine penmanship. From information given by a former generation, we learn he was an excellent teacher and able to do fine illuminated lettering which was a rarity in this section.

The church records today are incomplete and even when complete are often quite meagre. Much valuable church history is lost because of this. In the past the Reformed church has been more lax in this respect than her sister church and so there is more information concerning Lutheran activities. Probably some of the church's valuable records are resting in the dust of someone's attic. Too often the pastors or the secretaries considered these records personal property which was never so intended.

Christ Church owes a large debt to the late Mr. Lesh for his work in collecting, organizing, and having translated the records and minutes of our church. He arranged for typewritten copies to be given to the church and to the Monroe County Historical Society. Several years ago he presented a suitable safe to the congregations so that the records could be kept in security. We are also much indebted to Ruth Kemmerer Siptroth for gratuitously typing the voluminous notes and records accumulated by Mr. Lesh.



Rev. George B. Dechant
1860 - 1872



Rev. Richard H. Clare
1882 - 1892

Christ Lutheran
and
Reformed Congregations

Because of the research done by Mr. Lesh, we have more complete lists than ever before of the pastors serving the congregations at Hamilton. He also has collected complete biographies of most of these men and many of their pictures. The dates for their ministry here were fixed from their handwriting when proof of their tenure was difficult to ascertain and their records were available.

LUTHERAN

John Andrew Frederici.....	1763-1787	(His entries stop in 1777 and begin again in 1782. He had been ill and in debt and may have taken time off for these reasons.)
Frederick Neimeyer	1790-1800	
Christian F. Endress	1802-1804	
John Casper Dill	1805-1810	
Carl William Colson.....	1811-1814	
Peter Rupert	1816-1819	
Henry Kurtz	1820-1823	
Peter Rupert (2nd term) ..	1823-1828	
Joseph B. Gross	1828-1841	
George Heilig	1842-1857	(Between Rev. Gross and Rev. Heilig, a Rev. Hecht from Easton supplied for a short time.)
Adolphus Rumpff	1857-1858	
Samuel S. Kline	1858-1860	
Henry Seifert	1860-1869	
Joseph R. Focht	1869-1874	
George Roth	1874-1882	
Richard Henry Clare	1882-1892	
Cyrus Held	1892-1895	
C. W. T. Strasser	1895-1940	
Norman C. Kellow	1940-1946	
James G. Shannon.....	1947-1951	
John B. Bergstresser	1951-Present	

REFORMED

John Egedius Hecker	1769-1770	(Perhaps longer.)
John William Weber	1776-1782	
John William Ingold	1783-1786	(His handwriting occurs only in 1784, but he was at Plainfield in 1783-1786.)
Lebrecht Frederick Herman	1786-1790	(His entries occur only in 1788-1789. He was pastor at Plainfield from 1786-1790.)
John Henry Hoffmeier	1794-1798	
John Nicholas Pomp	1799-1804	
Frederick W. Van Der Sloot	1806-1809	(Names of Van Der Sloot and Thomas Pomp were not in Lesh notes but supplied by Pastor Bohner.)
Thomas Pomp (supplied)	1809-1811	
Theodore Ludwig Hoffeditz	1812-1834	
John Peter Decker	1835-1842	(Name supplied by Pastor Bohner.)
Theodore C. W. Hoffeditz	1842-1860	
George Benson Dechant	1860-1872	
Horace Daniel	1873-1877	
Charles W. Siegel	1877-1880	
Mahlon H. Mischler	1880-1883	
George W. Kerschner	1883-1889	
Charles B. Weaver	1889-1892	
Silas F. Laury	1892-1912	(Note: Most of this time he served as supply for he was also a teacher in the Fairview Academy.)
H. H. Hibschman	1895-1896	
William H. Hoch (11 mo.)	1896	
William H. Brong	1898-1899	
Elijah Kresge	1899-1902	
William B. Koehler (2 mo.)	1902-1903	(He died shortly after coming to his first charge.)
William H. Miller	1903-1907	
Floyd R. Shafer (June to Sept.)	1909	
George K. Ely	1910-1920	
Seward Kresge	1920-1926	
Adan A. Bohner	1926-Present	

Parsonage Property

We have examined the records very carefully and can find no place where any mention was made about a residence for the pastor. One of the explanations for this is the fact that the Hamilton Church was part of a charge that included Mount Bethel, Plainfield, Smithfield, Greenwich, and at times the Forks Congregations. Most of the time the preachers for this congregation resided in Mount Bethel and traveled the charge from that point. For a long time the Rev. Thomas Pomp who was located at Easton served the Reformed congregation at Hamilton, and so there was no need for a parsonage here.

After 1800 the Lutherans became quite strong and decided to have their pastor, who served other Lutheran congregations in this county, reside in this territory. In 1829 when the Rev. Joseph Gross was selected as pastor they took the decided step and rented a place for him in this township. Pastor Gross was very active in the community, and he persuaded them that it would be to their advantage to build a parsonage instead of renting one. For several years he resided at Snydersville and about 1836 succeeded in getting the church to undertake this enterprise. They went into the matter very carefully, finally deciding to build a parsonage like the home of Peter Kester. It was built in the year 1837 and is the same home which serves as a parsonage for the present Lutheran pastor. During the pastorate of Richard Clare the clapboard addition to the stone building was built. The parsonage was remodeled in 1947.

The parsonage for the present Reformed pastor is located in Kunkletown.

Ministers Lots

Between the years 1823 and 1825 there appear on the minutes entries showing that the proper church authorities had land either given to them or procured by purchase which were entitled "ministers lots." The income from these lots was used to pay the ministers' salaries over a period of years. When the income exceeded the salary, the balance was put into a "Charity Fund." Occasionally when money was scarce the congregation borrowed from the fund. No final disposal of these lots can be traced, although they were probably the lots sold to raise money for the building of the stone church. This problem raised its head when the question of remodeling the parsonage came up. The parsonage had evidently been built on one of the ministers lots. The Salem congregation had a part interest in

these lots at one time. No record of any transfer or disposal of their interest could be found in their records or ours. The question was settled by the Salem congregation deeding their one-fourth part in question to the Hamilton congregation gratis.

The German Language

As was stated previously, the first settlers were German as were the first ministers. All church records were entered in German until the year 1830. Most of the people could use both languages in their daily life, but when it came to religious instruction it had to be given in the language of Luther and their Bibles.

When the consideration of a new church was discussed, the matter of language came up; and when the articles of agreement by the congregations were drawn up by John Eyer in 1830 the following statements were included: "Should at a later date the congregations wish English services, if they have a quorum be granted that privilege, and not discourage them but have English services every fourteen days. They may have alternate German and English services, so arranged that there be no interference with the German congregation or Religion."

Gradually the English services became predominant according to the wish of the people. It became difficult to secure a pastor who could preach with facility in both languages. About 1870 the records have an item stating that they had a candidate but he was unable to preach in the German language and in consequence they could not hire him. In 1874 a Reverend J. R. Gladhill, a Lutheran minister, was here to preach a trial sermon. As he was unable to use the German language, a meeting was held to decide whether German be required of our ministers in the future. The no's predominated, but because of some dissension the minister would not consider coming. In 1877 Pastor George Roth translated the Articles of Agreement of 1830 from the German into the English. Services in German became monthly and bimonthly. Up to the year 1890 all the ministers were able to preach in both languages and did it in German about once every two months to please the older members. The last services in German were in the 1890's under the Reverend Cyrus Held.

The First Church

In the homes of the early German settlers there was an altar about which the family gathered for religious instruction. At times it became a community altar, for the neighbors would gather together into a congregation and meet in the homes of the community. This worked well until the group became too large, then they had to meet elsewhere. They might have done as some of the religious sects in Lancaster County still do today by holding their services on the threshing floors of their barns. Some information has come down to us testifying that the congregation at Hamilton met for a while in the local blacksmith shop. Later they held their services in the schoolhouse. It was not too long after their first communion service of which we have record that they began to devise ways and means to construct a place for their common altar.

By 1775 there was a schoolhouse, church, and graveyard established and in use. The church was a log structure about 20 by 30 feet as nearly as we can conclude. Traces of this old log church can be found located just back of the present structure and just within the enclosure of the cemetery wall.

One acre of land for the church, schoolhouse, and graveyard was donated in 1775 by Philip Bossert. Two additional acres of land were purchased from Daniel Heller and his wife, Eve, by William Serfass for the church and were to be used for a home for the sexton. George Hartlieb paid for one acre of this land.

There must have been some concern over the deed to the land donated by Philip Bossert, for in 1792 Melchoir Bossert and his wife, Margaret, gave a deed to the trustees of the church which reads as follows: "It was donated, given, set apart for to build a church or house thereon for the worship of Almighty God and like wise a school house for the instruction of youth and a graveyard for the interment of the dead for the use of the said Lutheran and Reformed, Protestant congregations in the community."

Mr. Bossert and his wife made this deed to forestall any strife and bitterness among the congregations in the future. It was headed "This Indenture in Trust" and indicates that Philip, his father, had set the land aside for this purpose and had himself enjoyed the church and schoolhouse which was built thereon.

The New Church—1829

Agitation for a new church began about 1818 to 1819. This section had prospered more than any other section of the county, and the Hamilton church ministered to the needs of members from all parts of the county. As the membership grew, the log church became inadequate for the needs of the worshippers. Also, a new generation was growing up, and they were ready for something new and better. Unfortunately, the records are incomplete and do not give us a clear picture of the activity taking place.

The Lutherans became incorporated in 1816, and the Reformeds incorporated about 1821. Incorporation gave them added powers.

At one time the congregation must have owned several hundred acres of land. About 1800 a Robert Levers gave 80 acres to the church. He was a politically prominent person and owned much land between Hamilton church and Saylorsburg. Then there were the ministers lots which were rented to apply to the minister's salary. There is no record where possession of these lots came from, but we do have record that John Erdman rented one for $60.00 and Peter Kester rented one for $60.00. These lots may have been purchased by the church authorities during prosperous times, for in connection with this subject there is an entry stating that the "first buy amounted to $300.00 and the second buy amounted to $110.00." Some hint is made in the minutes indicating that persons made gifts of land to the church, but there are no deeds showing conveyance. Transfer could have been made orally to the trustees.

The following resolution was found in the minutes of November 28, 1818: "Resolved to offer at the best price, the entire or part of land now held by the Lutheran and Reformed Churches." They were evidently beginning to secure the funds for a new church.

On January 1, 1819, they sold more than a hundred acres to Rudolph Drach for $2400.00. There must have been some uncertainty about their holdings for Mr. George Keller and Mr. Henry Fenner were commissioned to search the church property holdings. Eventually these difficulties were surmounted.

On December 16, 1822, there was a public sale of land in eight lots by the Reformed congregation which were purchased by the following people: Peter Kester (2 lots) $120.00; George Schlotter (1 lot) $187.35; John Erdman (1 lot) $86.77; Rudolph Drach (1 lot) $210.90; Michael Altemose (1 lot) $142.46; Fred Keiser (1

lot) $226.46; Isaac Marsh (1 lot) $100.01. Of this total amount of $1468.05, half of it or $734.02½ was due to the Lutheran congregation.

Altogether the records show that the congregations sold land to the amount of $3864.05 which put them in a position to be able to finance a new church building.

On May 18, 1823, at a joint meeting of both congregations it was decided after much discussion to begin the building of a new church to be made of brick. The cornerstone was not actually laid until May 28, 1829, and by then the decision to build of brick had fortunately been changed to that of building of stone.

There were many problems arising from such a large and unfamiliar undertaking, and so Mr. John Eyer was elected to draw up a new church ordinance or articles so there would be no misunderstanding between the two congregations.

Building was delayed for many years probably because the people felt they could not afford a new church. Subscription lists for the years between 1823 and 1829 show that contributions were very small. The sale of the church lands was the real source of revenue for the new church. Another reason for delay might have been the difficulty the leading carpenter, Mr. Levi M. Slutter, had in finding a place to board his men while the building was in progress. His family increased rapidly, and his household could not take on these boarders along with the regular household duties. Another reason might have been that during these years there were frequent changes in the pastorate, until the Lutherans secured a progressive young man by the name of Joseph B. Gross. He came in April 1828 and brought new life to the impetus for a new church. The matter of the new church was brought up in May at a meeting and four men were selected to take up new subscriptions. They were Peter Kester, John Eyer, John Keller, and Joseph Kamere. They reported on September 16, the following subscriptions: Peter Kester—$506.50; John Eyer—$500.00; John Keller—$800.60; Joseph Kamere—$725.00. Whether these subscriptions were ever collected is never made clear by the minutes.

Two architects were selected: Peter Kester for the Lutherans and Henry Fenner for the Reformed congregation. They were also head auditors, and John Eyer was elected corresponding secretary and treasurer.

The new building was to be erected just south of the old church building and was to be 50 feet long and 40 feet wide or a few feet

CHRIST CHURCH

HAMILTON SQUARE, PENNSYLVANIA

Two Hundredth Anniversary of Founding of the Congregation

One Hundredth and Twenty-sixth Anniversary of Dedication of the Building

NOVEMBER 13, 1955

Reformed Pastor ..... THE REVEREND ADAN A. BOHNER

Lutheran Pastor ..... THE REVEREND JOHN B. BERGSTRESSER

MORNING SERVICE, 11:00 A. M.

Twenty-third Sunday after Trinity

PASTOR BERGSTRESSER, *Officiating*

VELMA HARTMAN, *Organist*

WILLIAM LOTZ, *Choir Director*

Silent Prayer
Prelude—"Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring"—Chorale ..... *J. S. Bach*
Hymn 286: "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"
The Confession of Sins, Page 9 (Common Service Book)
Introit and Collect, Page 113
The Epistle—Philippians 1:3-11
The Sentence for Trinity, Pages 49 and 50
The Gospel—Matthew 22:15-22
The Apostles' Creed
Hymn 275: "O That the Lord Would Guide My Ways"
Sermon—"Fellowship in the Furtherance of the Gospel" ..... *Dr. Robert C. Clare*

(Our guest minister is the former pastor of St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Baltimore, Maryland, and son of Dr. Richard H. Clare, former pastor of this congregation.)

The Offertory, Page 18
The Offering
Offertory: "The Swan" ..... *Camille Saint-Saens*
Anthem: "Recessional" ..... *Reginald DeKoven*
Pastoral Prayer
The Lord's Prayer
Hymn 254: "O God of Jacob, by Whose Hand"
The Benediction
Silent Prayer
Postlude: "Triumphal March"—Opus 56 ..... *Edvard Grieg*

AFTERNOON SERVICE, 2:30 P. M.

PASTOR BOHNER, *Officiating*

VELMA HARTMAN, *Organist*

Organ Prelude: "Meditation Religieuse"
(Memories of Dunfermline Abbey) ..... *William A. Wolf*
"The Lost Chord" ..... *Sir Arthur Sullivan*
"Bless This House" ..... Arranged by *A. Schreiner*
"Prelude in E Flat" ..... *Edward M. Read*
Invocation and Prayer ..... *Pastor Bohner*
Hymn 185: "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name"
Scripture: I Peter 5:1-11 ..... *Pastor Bergstresser*

Gloria Patri
Apostles' Creed
Pastoral Prayer
Offering
Anthem: "O Lord, Be Merciful"—J. W. Kenney ..... *The Hamilton Choir*
Offertory: "Hour of Devotion" ..... *F. G. Rathbun*
Greetings from former pastors:
THE REVEREND GEORGE K. ELY, *Reformed*
THE REVEREND C. W. T. STRASSER, *Lutheran*
Hymn 265: "We Thank Thee, Lord"
Dedication Service:
Altar presented by Mrs. May Saylor Meyers
Balcony lights presented by Mrs. Anna Bittenbender in memory of the Charles F. Bittenbender family
Flags presented by Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Reaser
Solo: "The Lord's Prayer" ..... *William Lotz*
Sermon: The Reverend Frank W. Teske, D.D.
Hymn 452: "We Would Be Building, Temples Still Undone"
Benediction ..... *Pastor Bohner*
Postlude: "Postlude"—Opus 661 ..... *Carl Wilhelm Kern*

EVENING SERVICE, 8:00 P. M.

PASTOR BERGSTRESSER, *Officiating*
VELMA HARTMAN, *Organist*
MR. MARTIN ECK, *Guest Organist*

Organ Prelude: "Prelude in B Flat" ..... *Franz Liszt*
"In a Monastery Garden" ..... *Albert W. Ketelbey*
"Fairest Lord Jesus" ..... *Henry Elwood*
"Intermezzo" from Cavalier Rusticana ..... *P. Masagni*
Hymn 243: "Great Is the Lord Our God"
Vespers, Page 40
Psalm 84, Page 183 (read responsively)
Gloria Patri
The Lesson: St. Luke 6:39-49 ..... *Pastor Bohner*
Special music by children of the Sunday School ..... *Nancy Hartman, pianist*
Greetings from a former pastor:
THE REVEREND JAMES G. SHANNON, *Lutheran*
Solo: "How Beautiful Upon the Mountain" ..... *Harker*
(Sung by Mrs. Gorman Roof)
Remarks ..... *Pastor Bergstresser*
Hymn 140: "Spirit of Mercy, Truth, and Love"
Address ..... *The Reverend Ralph Bergstresser*
Offering
Anthem: "Abide With Me" (The Choir) ..... *Rob Roy Peery*
Offertory: "Jerusalem the Golden" ..... *E. L. Ashford*
Address ..... *The Reverend Daniel Bergstresser*
Closing Vespers, Page 44
Hymn 574 (second tune): "Now the Day Is Over"
Benediction ..... *Pastor Bergstresser*
Postlude: "Recessional"—Symphony No. 1 ..... *Johannes Brahms*

wider if dimensions were not suitable. The mortar had to be prepared in the fall, buried, and allowed to lay over winter before it could be used. The stones had to be hauled from the large stone rows that surrounded the fields in the neighborhood. The minutes of this period clearly show that the spirit of enthusiasm had taken possession of the people for the work of building the new church.

Cornerstone Laying

Elaborate plans were made for the cornerstone on May 28, 1829. This was by far the largest church in the county at the time and drew its membership from every point on the compass. They had invited talent from Easton and all sections below the Blue Mountains.

The church record states that, "The cornerstone for the new church was laid with great ceremony. Before the morning service the rewritten articles were read before the church council and trustees and then accepted and signed. After this the congregation went out to the ceremonies of laying the cornerstone, and in this cornerstone were laid the history record and the Articles of the church.

"The laying of the cornerstone and the ceremonies were in charge of Hon. Rev. Theo. Hoffeditz, Rev. J. B. Probst and Rev. J. B. Gross."

Church Articles

Here is a copy of the Church Articles which were approved at the laying of the cornerstone—translated to English:

"Hamilton Township. Northampton County in the State of Pennsylvania.

We, the said congregation of Christ's German and the Evangelical Reformed Church by the grace of our Good Lord have come to an understanding and conclusion to build a new congregational church in Hamilton Township: as our deacon Philip Bossert presented one acre of land and William Serfass paid for one acre and George Hartlieb also paid for one acre of land on which to build a church and school and a graveyard.

The church (and cemetery) which our forefathers built in 1775 has since become very much depreciated and badly in need of repairs, both congregations have decided to build a new church on the land stated above.

A God fearing congregation, to hold church services, to avoid misunderstandings and doubt and to keep in good order have drawn up the following Articles:

I. This church should be built as a congregational church, so that one Sunday one congregation hold church services and on the next Sunday the other congregation should hold their services. Both ministers should alternate, so that both congregations be satisfied and pleased.

II. No minister shall preach in this church who is not an Evangelical Reformed or Lutheran minister, who is not from Evangelical Reformed or Evangelical Synod, examined or ordained. Should a minister of either

congregation decide to leave, the congregation shall act according to their rights and their decision. The other congregation should not discuss or interfere. No congregation should dare to criticize or advise or seek to rule the same. On such an occasion no member of the other congregation should dictate or try to reign. It should so be that each congregation handle their own troubles according to their thoughts and ideas.

III. Should funeral services occur, an exception to the above articles is made. Had the minister announced to preach this or that Sunday, and on account of the funeral services, each minister must be willing to exchange with each other and when convenient to both, ministers and congregations, he must make up his services in order that he has done his duty.

IV. Charity money and collections shall from date to date be collected in both congregations and must be used to help pay for the new church. After the church is paid for the money is to be used for whatever is needed. Any repairs, etc. is to be paid for by both congregations from above stated charity money.

V. Should it happen that the congregation be too large to assemble in the church, or that one of the congregation wishes to have their own church on account of disagreement (God forbid it), the Lutherans should unite with the Reformed or vice versa, if 2/3 of the congregation agree they may separate and build, but 2/3 of the congregation must be united and agree.

VI. Should the Elders, Trustees, or Deacons no longer have the rights as stated in the incorporated charter, and should anything important such as securing a new minister, the departure of a minister or the school teacher or other important matters come up, the remaining members should put it to a vote. All business excepting anything pertaining to the new building which belong to the duties and business of the architectures.

VII. Should at a later date the congregation wish to have English services, if they have a quorum—majority—they should be granted that privilege. Do not discourage them but have English services every fourteen days. Then have alternate German and English services, the minister being either Lutheran or Reformed religion, so that there shall be no interference with the German Congregation or Religion.

VIII. These Articles should be read to the Congregations and should they desire to change any of the Articles, they may do so, providing they have a majority.

(These preceding Articles were signed by the architectures, trustees, elders, deacons of both congregations.)

Undersigned this day and date:

Evangelical Lutheran Side	Evangelical Reformed Side
Architecture or Contractor	*Architecture or Contractor*
Peter Kester	Henry Fenner

After the cornerstone laying in May, the work on the church continued until the fall. Mr. Lesh got the following account from Elizabeth Hauser Starner: "After the wall became too high for them to work from the ground they constructed a ramp or runaway over which the stones, mortar and building materials were hauled. The ramp was placed on the southwest side and by raising it they were able to wheel their materials to the top of the building. It took the whole of the following summer until the new building was ready for dedication."

The Dedication

A notice of October 8, 1830, in the Easton newspaper, *The Centinel,* reads:

> CONSECRATION
>
> Next Saturday and Sunday, November 6 and 7 the new STONE CHURCH in Hamilton Township, Northampton County, will be consecrated to which all the friends of the public service are invited. Several strange Clergymen will be present on this occasion and a service in the English Language will be delivered.
>
> HENRY FENNER
> PETER KESTER
>
> N. B. The sale of spiritous liquor near the building will be prohibited.

The most information we have on the happenings of these two days comes from the church record. On Saturday morning the church services opened with prayer by the Reverend Theodore L. Hoffeditz, the Reformed minister of the congregation. "He offered a forceful prayer and in this prayer he implored our good and gracious Lord to have pity on us and bless our new edifice, giving it the name, Christ Church." Evidently before this time the union church had no specific name. The congregations were usually referred to as the German Lutheran and German Reformed Congregations of Hamilton Township. The Lutherans had used the name of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hamilton Township.

The record continues as follows: "After this the Reformed minister, Rev. J. C. Becker, occupied the minister's place and gave an interesting and impressive sermon on Solomon 6:1-7. The attendance was very large and the weather favorable. The afternoon services were in charge of Reverend Bausen from Nazareth, Pa., who preached an impressive sermon to a large audience from Luke 18:9-15. It was the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican.

"There was no evening program because there was no arrangement made for lighting the building.

"The big day came on Sunday morning. The church services were led by the Rev. J. B. Gross, Lutheran minister. He led in prayers in English using the name of the church, Christ Church. The regular sermon of the forenoon was delivered by the Rev. J. P. Hecht, the Lutheran Evangelical minister from Easton, Pa. He gave an impressive sermon to a large audience. He selected his text from Luke 11:28, 'But he said, Yea, rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it'.

"In the afternoon the Reformed minister, Rev. Theodore Hoffeditz preached a powerful sermon from the First Book of Moses: Genesis 12:1-7. This was the promise the Lord made to Abram and his seed when they were to come into the land of Canaan."

They must have determined to make the services very interesting, for they hired the Nazareth Hall Military Band which had a wide reputation in this section of the state. The record states: "The Music Band of Nazareth was hired and visited us and enlivened the occasion both days with their music."

With their dreams of a new church realized, this must have been a wonderful season for the Hamilton people.

Cost of the New Church

On August 6, 1831, the duly elected auditors, George Keller, Samuel Reis, and Peter Shaw, met and recorded the total expenses for building the new church as $3690.91. In the minutes of a meeting of September 5, 1831, there is a reference to the fact that details of this figure of $3690.91 were kept by another person in a special book. No trace of this book can be found. However, in another connection we find a statement that the total cost of the new church was about $4,300.

Lighting

In the early church records we find that services were not held in the evening because of the difficulty of lighting the church. The earliest means were tallow candles.

A record of May 17, 1861, explains that two chandeliers, pulpit lamps, and bracket lamps with fixtures were purchased from Samuel Melick of Stroudsburg on March 1, 1861, for $43.25. A subscription list was passed among the members and the full amount realized. These were probably kerosene lamps. This method of lighting was

used until 1929 at the time of the Centennial Anniversary when electric lighting was installed.

Heating the Church

The early log church had no fireplace and was heated as were the early meeting houses. Stoves were not used until the year 1800. In some of these meeting houses fur bags made of wolfskins were nailed to the seats. In winter the church people put their feet in them. Also, they allowed their dogs to come in and lay at their masters' feet to keep them warm. The second method was the foot stoves or foot warmers made in the form of pierced metal boxes standing on short legs and holding hot charcoals. These were used oftenest by the women and children.

In the Hamilton church stoves did not make their appearance until the present structure was built. There is no proof as to how the church was first heated, but in 1841 an entry in the minutes says that $21.37 was spent for the drum and pipes. This purchase was made for an arrangement of two stoves placed at a distance from each other and connected by a long tin drum about eighteen inches in diameter which served as a large heating surface. Mr. Lesh remembers his first visit to the church and the impression made upon him by the strange-looking arrangement. It probably was not strange in appearance to the members, for this same method was used to heat many of the homes in the community only on a smaller scale.

In 1920 it was decided to install a hot air heating system. To make room for this heating system, it was necessary to do some excavating in the cellar. This was a difficult procedure, for the workmen had to break through the thick walls and then remove the big rocks they encountered in their digging. They also found that the cellar had to be drained. It was a large undertaking; however, volunteer labor helped to keep down the expense. Total cost according to minutes dated April 21, 1924, was $485.00—a very reasonable amount.

In 1941 the decision was made to install an up-to-date oil heating system in the church. The cost for this unit was around $1200.00.

Improvements—1870

Around the years 1870 interest in the church was at a high point. Much of this was due to the fact that Mr. Charles E. Kistler, who owned the tannery at Sciota, had recently become a leading officer. The records show that he was back of every forward movement of this period. He was progressive and could raise money easily.

At this time a contract was made with Anthony Goth of Bethlehem for $984.50 to paint, frescoe, and guild the church the same as the Plainfield church. The reference was made to the Plainfield church because it had been erected at this time. The vote for the work was 13 ayes and 2 nays.

Repairs were made to the steeple and the roof, the graveyard was finished, and the wall about the graveyard was covered by a wooden roof. The total cost for all repairs came to $1773.18.

No other important changes were made until 1929.

The Centennial Anniversary

As the present church building was erected in 1829, it was decided by the church authorities some years before 1929 that they would celebrate the year 1929 by elaborate ceremonies becoming an institution that had reached the century mark. They started to raise funds for this purpose and for repairing and improving the church building.

The minutes of April 18, 1927, state that it was unanimously decided to paint the exterior of the church and to use gold leaf on the steeple ball. Mr. R. F. Hahn was put in charge of this. Mr. Jacob Hartman was to place poles for electric lights on the church property.

Nearly a year passed before the minutes show further plans. On April 8, 1928, the following committee was appointed to visit other churches and report on May 7, 1928, to the Hamilton church: George V. Metzgar, Floyd Bittenbender, Frank Kemmerer, Norman Fenner, and Edward R. Wolff. The committee proceeded in earnest and in May the following decisions were made: To improve and beautify the church without any radical changes, to leave the pews as they are, to leave the pulpit as it is, to repair and paint, to replace the old-style windows, to repair the steeple where necessary, to repair and permit the roughcasting of the exterior of the church, and to purchase new carpet. All of this work was faithfully carried out.

The total collection to renovate the church for the Centennial Anniversary amounted to $3796.25. This was just about the amount spent for the construction of the church in 1829.

The Centennial and rededication services were held on November 24, 1929. The morning service was at 10:30 A. M. with the Rev. C. W. T. Strasser, the Lutheran pastor, officiating. The Order of Service from the Lutheran Hymnal was used. The sermon was preached by the Reverend C. E. Held, and an address given by Prof.

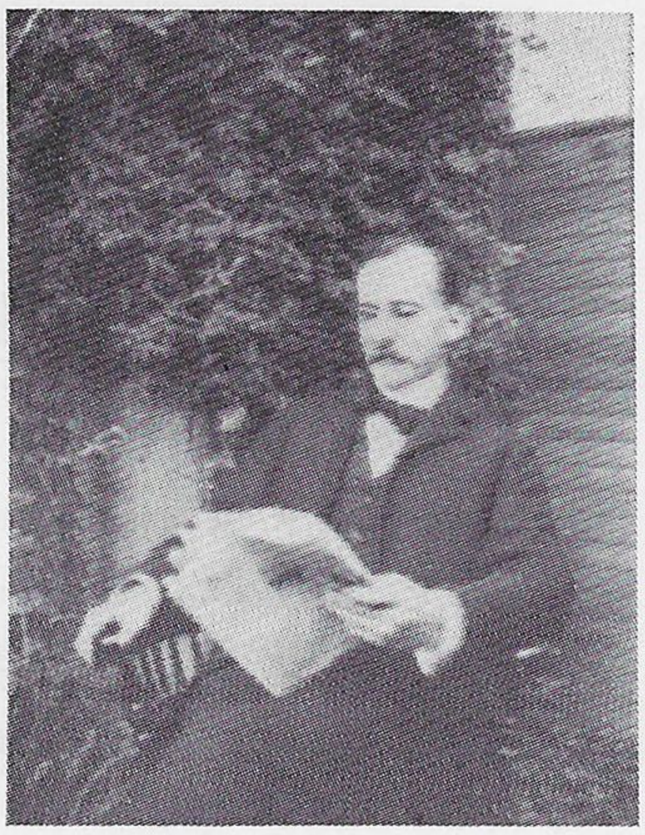
William S. Lesh. The organist for the service was Grace Hartman. Special music was presented by the choir and a solo rendered by Mr. Max Kalfus.

The afternoon service began at 2:30 P. M. Special addresses were given by the Reverend F. W. Smith and the Reverend W. H. Brong. The organist was Mrs. Lucy Quig. Special music was presented by the Stringed Quartet of Zion Reformed Church, Stroudsburg, and the Stroudsburg Glee Club.

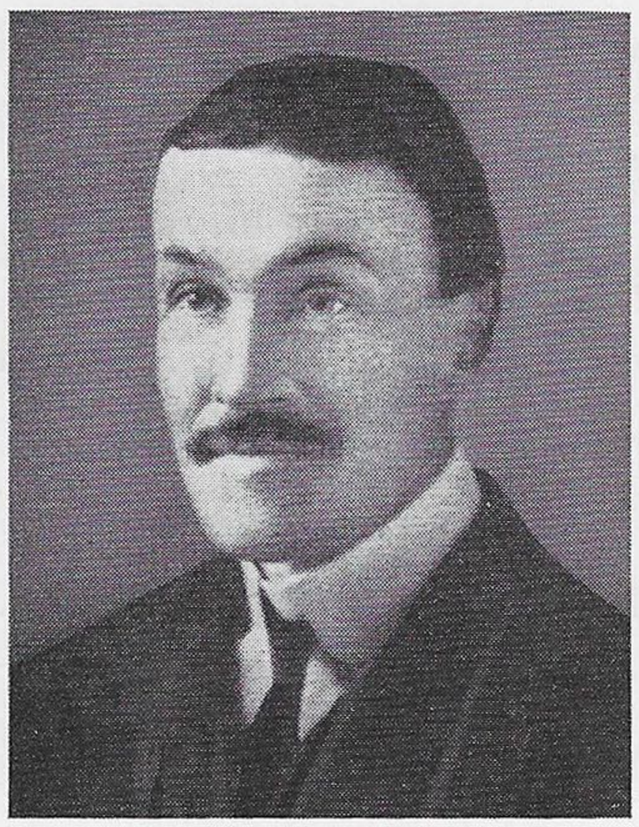
The Reformed pastor, the Rev. Adan A. Bohner, officiated at the evening service which was held at 7:30 P. M. The sermon was delivered by the Reverend Frank H. Blatt. The organist was Grace Hartman, and special music was presented by the choir.

The following account of the celebration was published in the Stroudsburg newspaper, *The Record,* on November 25, 1929:

> Sunday was a happy day in the history of the historic church, Hamilton Lutheran and Reformed Church, Reverends Strasser and Bohner, pastors. The 100th anniversary of the church was celebrated in a manner fitting the occasion, impressive and enjoyable. The occasion was the means of bringing back many former members, some of them had not been within its portals for many years.
>
> Despite the weather conditions there were overflow audiences in attendance for each of the three services; morning, afternoon and evening. There were many regrets that Reverend J. U. Smith of Gilberts, the dean of the clergy of the county, was unable to attend because of a funeral he had to conduct. However, every other feature of the program as outlined in the Record was carried out.
>
> Everyone who visited the church located in Hamilton Square was much impressed with the great changes made during the remodeling processes which were carried out for some time past. These have been fully detailed in these columns and have made the church more attractive.
>
> The celebration was of a nature which brought much joy not alone to the members who worship here but hundreds of others from all sections of the county who attended during the day. The church is distinctive by reason of its beautiful colonial architecture which has been restored wherever possible and otherwise improved.
>
> Speakers during the day were Reverend W. H. Brong of the Plainfield charges in Northampton County; Reverend Klick of Nazareth; Reverend C. E. Held of Sunnytown; Reverend F. H. Blatt of Stroudsburg, Pa.
>
> The musical features proved exceedingly enjoyable to the audiences. Much of the history of the old edifice was given during the exercises which was carefully followed. Professor William S. Lesh in his remarks brought out many facts of this value he had secured after much careful research. (Then followed a list of those who had been donors of memorial windows.)



Rev. Silas F. Laury
1892 - 1917



Rev. C. W. T. Strasser
1895 - 1940

Memorial Windows

When the question of remodeling the church was under consideration, the joint council decided on May 7, 1928, "to replace the old-style windows" with the modern church windows. When this action became known, many people brought pressure to retain the old windows because they wished to keep the Colonial church architecture inviolate. This question was settled in favor of change at a meeting on April 1, 1929, and bids were asked for memorial windows at $40.00 each. Here is a list of the memorials and donors:

Jacob Harman and Wife
by their daughters Clara and Mrs. and Rev. Strasser

Melchoir Bossard and Wife
by William Hood and Foster and Frank Bossard

Alexander Harps and Wife
by Miles Harps and Wife

Jacob Slutter and Wife
by son Cleveland

Manassah W. Fetherman and Wife
by daughter, Mrs. Carrie Snyder

John L. Haney and Wife
Abraham and Cristiana Fetherman
by daughter

Jeremiah Fetherman and Wife
by Clayton Fetherman

Joseph Fabel and Violet Fabel
by Mrs. John Fabel

Mr. and Mrs. William Bentzoni
by family

John H. Fenner and Wife
by Frances Fenner

Romanus Snyder
by family

Father and Mother
by George V. Metzgar and family

Joseph H. Snyder and Wife
by Caraline Snyder

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Bittenbender
by their daughter, Mrs. Jennie Harps

Nettie G. Kresge
by Kresge family

Gustavus Baltz and Wife
by Lizzie M. Baltz

Andrew Meixell and Wife
by the family

Theodore Saylor and Wife
by their daughter, May H. Meyers

George Fabel

Charles Fetherman and Wife
by William L. Andre and Wife

Levi Slutter and Wife Elizabeth
by Lydia A. Fetherman

The Haney Family
by J. Henry Haney

P. Joel Hahn
by Emma S. Hahn

Edwin F. Werkheiser
by wife Lizzie

Mr. Edwin Williams
by wife Flora

Grandfather and Grandmother
Abraham and Rachael Fetherman
by Belle M. Young

Joseph Fellencer and Wife

Barnet Fellencer and Wife
by Edwin and Joseph Fellencer

(A glass plaque naming the memorials and the donors was presented by H. E. G. F. and H. J. Young families.

The Pipe Organ

In the earliest days of the church no musical instruments were used. The singing was usually started by the school teacher or the sexton who used a tuning fork and pitch pipe. Quite early in the history of the church an old reed organ was used for services, and later the piano was also used.

From time to time the subject of procuring a pipe organ was discussed but never acted upon. However, at a time when the desire for such an organ was strong, a fortunate set of circumstances occurred. The Stroudsburg Methodist Church was making improvements and wished to sell their organ which did not fit into the pattern of their improvements but was still in very good shape. In April 1929 the joint council met and decided to install a pipe organ as soon as convenient. On April 10, 1930, the council met for the purpose of purchasing a pipe organ from the Methodist Church in Stroudsburg which was being offered to them for $550.00. On April 22, 1935, the committee reported that the total cost of the organ and installation amounted to $1853.13.

The first elected organist was Miss Grace Hartman. She served before this date but was officially elected in April 1932. Subsequent organists for Christ Church were Miss Dora Snyder, Mrs. Bertha Young, Miss Nancy Thomas, and our present organist, Mrs. Velma Hartman.

Our Church As It Is Today

The Cemetery

From the time of the Centennial up until the 1950's little or no

work needed to be done to the church building. However, the cemetery was in very bad condition with most of the stones leaning or fallen over completely. Mr. William Lesh interested enough people to see that the work of resetting the stones was done. About 25 stones were reset through the generosity of the descendants of those buried there. The major part of the work on the remaining 80 stones was volunteer and done by a committee consisting of William Lesh, Harrison Taylor, and William Slutter. Mr. Harrison Taylor and Mr. Brinton Kunkle paid for the cement used in the work on these stones.

The Church Exterior

On Sunday afternoon, November 9, 1952, the joint congregations of the Christ Lutheran and Reformed Church met and expressed their wish that the stone work of the church be pointed, if possible, and other repairs made to beautify and preserve the building. It was the general opinion that the stucco did not serve the purpose for which it was intended.

There were three important reasons why this action was necessary. Upon examination, it was discovered that 70% of the stucco was loose, causing water damage to the walls both inside and out. Secondly, the window casings were in a rapid process of decay. Every window showed dry rot which in time would have caused irreparable damage. The third reason was to beautify the house of God.

The contract for the work was awarded to Mr. Amzi Altemose of Brodheadsville on a time and material basis. Most of the work was done in the early spring and summer of 1953. The stucco was removed, the walls were sandblasted, the stones were pointed, and the surface of the stones waterproofed with a special sealer. The windows were ferred out, fitted with copper flashing, and caulked. The rotted wood was removed and replaced. New spouting and storm windows were installed.

The total cost for the work done on the exterior was $6,995.40. The cost of the spouting was $345.53 paid to Mr. Forrest Stout. The total cost of the storm windows amounted to $1080.00. The joint Lutheran and Reformed council voted to have each congregation pay half of the total bill minus any donations to the joint treasury.

The Church Interior

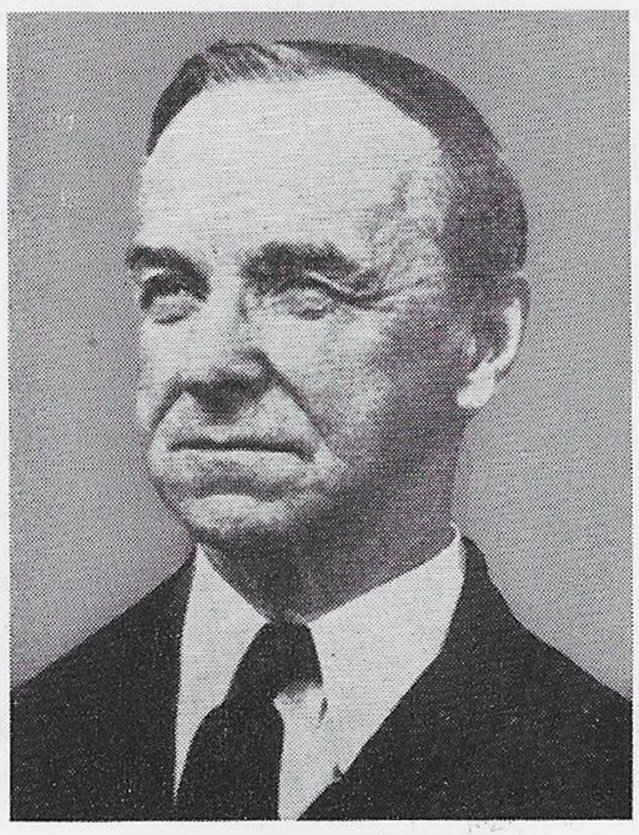
The congregations of Christ Church are well blessed by the beauty of their church interior. The Colonial architecture and decoration is outstanding and kept in good condition by the members.

In 1950 a lectern, baptismal font, and chancel chairs were presented to the church as a memorial by Miss Sue L. Dechant in memory of her father, the Reverend George Benson Dechant, who was pastor of the Reformed congregation from 1860 to 1872.

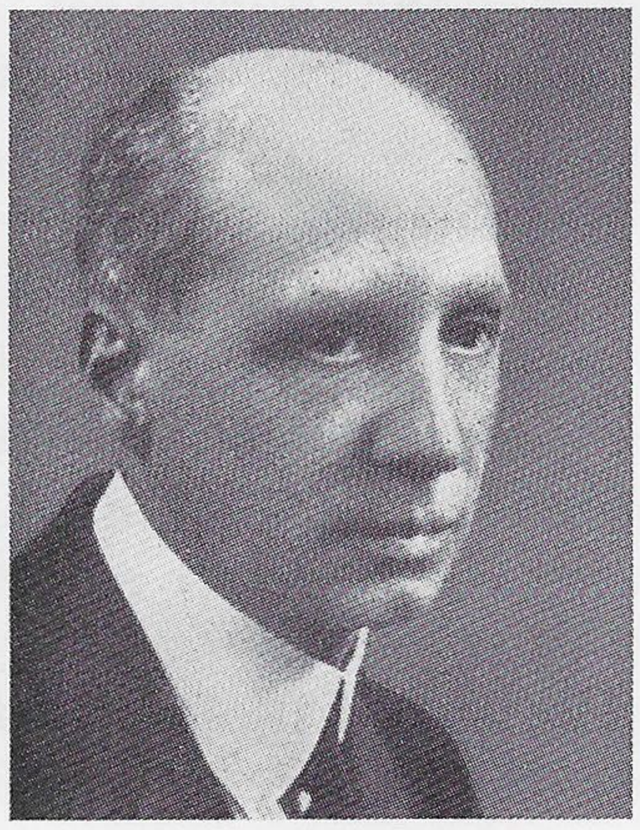
At a meeting of the joint council on June 29, 1954, it was suggested by William Haney that they get price estimates on the cost of redecorating the interior. The minutes between June 1954 and January 1955 show that much business was transacted by the council members. A fireproof furnace room was constructed, fire extinguishers were voted on and placed throughout the building, the organ was repaired, and William Lotz designed choir and storage closets for either side of the organ which were built by Robert Bittenbender.

At the meeting on January 11, 1955, much discussion took place concerning the two bids received for the redecorating of the interior. The contract was awarded to Mr. William Sunday of Stroudsburg. Mr. Burnice Hawk and Mrs. Lydia Howerter were placed on a committee to supervise the work. Motion was also passed that the pews be painted Colonial white and finished in natural cherry stain. The other colors were to be duplicated. The chandelier was to be taken down, polished, and rewired. Mr. Ralph Buzzard took charge of having the chandelier polished and rehung.

The work was completed in good order and with minimum inconvenience to the congregations. The cost for the painting was $3546.68, and each congregation paid half. Upon completion Mr. Sunday said that he considered it a privilege to have been awarded the contract and that he considered it the most challenging work of his career. For example, there were twenty-seven shades to be matched in the ceiling alone.



Rev. George K. Ely
1910 - 1920



Rev. Seward Kresge
1920 - 1926

200th Anniversary Celebration

For the 200th anniversary celebration three gifts have been presented to the church and will be dedicated at the afternoon service. An altar to match the design of the lectern and baptismal font has been presented by Mrs. May Saylor Meyers. (The offering plates, cross and vases in use at the present time are gifts of Mrs. Meyers.) Balcony lights have been presented by Mrs. Anna C. Bittenbender in memory of the Charles F. Bittenbender family. The American and Christian flags have been presented by Mr. and Mrs. Frederick R. Reaser.

Church Officials

The sexton for Christ Church is Mr. Charles Smith. He has been sexton for a long period of time and still remembers when it was his job to light the kerosene lamps of the chandelier.

The organist for both congregations is Mrs. Jacob Hartman; the choir director is Mr. William Lotz. The present members of the choir are Eva Shoemaker, Mary Ellen Lotz, Martha Jean Kemmerer, Edith Young, Elise Shafer, Mary Voige, Harry Bartholomew, William Lotz, and Jacob Hartman.

The officials of the joint council, Lutheran and Reformed, are:

President: Mr. Willard Shoemaker

Secretary: Mrs. Ada Green Hansen

Treasurer: Mr. Russell Bittenbender

Lutheran Council Members:

Elders: Mr. William Lotz
Mr. John Mackes, *Treasurer*
Mr. George Metzgar, Sr.
Mr. Robert Rinker, *Secretary*

Deacons: Mr. Eugene Haller
Mrs. Charles H. Haney
Mr. William Haney
Mr. Jacob Hartman

Trustees: Mrs. Martin Hansen
Mr. Burnice Hawk
Mrs. Lydia Howerter, *Financial Secretary*
Mr. George Kitchen, *President*

Reformed Council Members:

Elders: Mr. Robert Reaser
Mr. John VanBuskirk
Mr. Robert Bittenbender
Mr. William Slutter

Deacons: Mr. Leo Colabaugh
Mr. Robert Feitig
Mr. Elwood Longyhore
Mr. Kenneth Reaser

Trustees: Mr. Fred Reaser, *Vice President*
Mr. Willard Shoemaker, *Treasurer*
Mr. William Snyder
Mr. Harry Bartholomew

President of Reformed Council:
Rev. Adan Bohner

Secretary (not a member):
Mrs. Willard Shoemaker

The Sunday School Organization

A union Sunday School meets each Lord's Day in the church nave and balcony. Their hope for the future is to have increased facilities by the building of a Sunday School addition.

The officers at the present time are:

Superintendent—Mrs. Charles Lessig
Assistant Superintendent—Mr. William Snyder
Pianist—Nancy Hartman
Assistant Pianist—Nancy Metzgar
Secretary—Miss Vera Fenner
Treasurer—Mr. George Metzgar, Sr.
Cradle Roll Superintendent—Mrs. Fred Kjar
Home Dept. Superintendent—Mrs. Gwen Hahn

The teachers for the different classes are as follows:

Nursery—Mrs. Charles Kemmerer
Beginners—Marion Metzgar, *assisted by* Nancy Metzgar
Primary—Nancy Haney, *assisted by* Joan Hunt
Junior Boys—Mr. Kenneth Reaser
Junior Girls—Mrs. Elmer Veety, *assisted by* Nancy Hartman
Ever Welcome Class—Mrs. Alex Voige, *assisted by*
Mrs. Raymond Shafer
Faithful Workers Class
Men's Class Mr. William Snyder

The Ever Welcome Class and the Faithful Workers Class have adopted many projects beneficial to the church. The Faithful Workers are engaged in purchasing paraments for the lectern and pulpit in liturgical colors for the seasons of the church year. They have purchased red which have been used, and have recently purchased green paraments which are to be used for the first time at the 200th anniversary services. The Ever Welcome Class since 1951 have purchased twelve white confirmation gowns, have paid and arranged for the erection of a Colonial-style signpost for the front of the church, and have purchased a first-rate motion picture projector and large-size screen to be used for inspirational and educational purposes.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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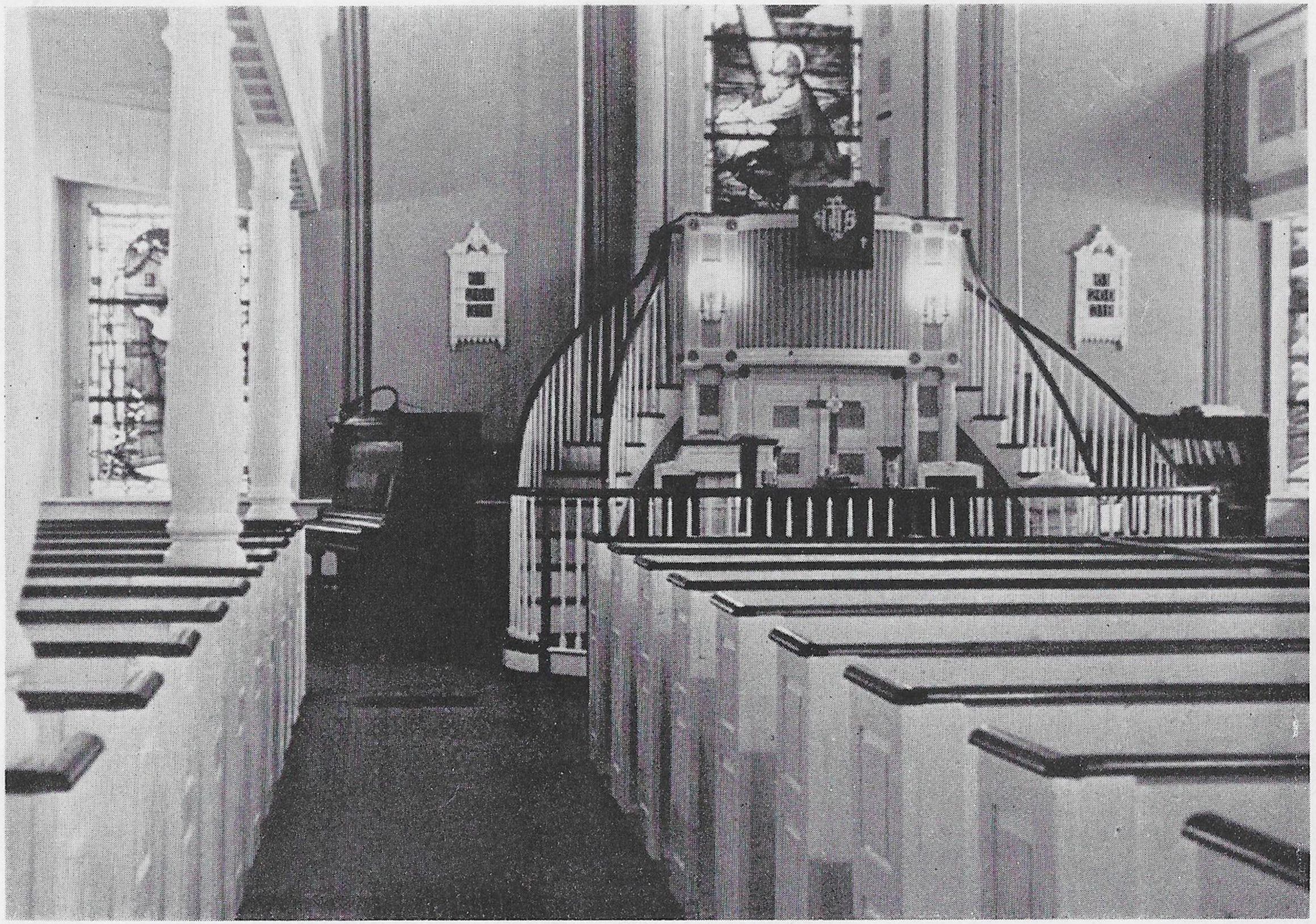
Grateful thanks are hereby extended to Mrs. John Bergstresser for the compilation of this anniversary booklet.

The altar flowers for the anniversary have been placed in memory of Father and Mother, George and Alice Hagerman, by Mrs. Howard Detrick and Mrs. Jonathan Deibert.



View of the Interior of Christ Church, Hamilton Square